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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KWMN](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: SUDAN/DARFUR: NO IMPLEMENTATION OF VAW PLAN OF
ACTION ON THE GROUND

REF: A. (A) KHARTOUM 269
[1](#)B. (B) KHARTOUM 117

Classified By: Poloff L. Wahid, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

[1](#)1. (SBU) A visit to the field reveals there is little real progress to date in the implementation on the ground of the Plan of Action to Combat Violence Against Women. Government officials had recently (reftel A) cited some human rights training for the police, the stationing of female police officers in IDP camps, the distribution of the Amended Circular 2, and an extensive media campaign as significant progress. Activity in the field, however, reveals that the claims are overstated. The UN, not the Sudanese government, has conducted whatever limited human rights training that has taken place to date. In fact, there were no large-scale media campaigns about violence against women, clinics continued to disregard Amended Circular 2, and government female police officers are not stationed in IDP camps. Overall, written plans and the formation of committees have not resulted in significant action on the ground. End Summary.

South Darfur Visit

[1](#)2. (SBU) From February 6-9, Poloff visited Nyala, South Darfur, to assess progress on the plan of action. Poloff met with the United Nations Human Rights Unit (UNMIS-HR), the Police Commissioner of South Darfur, African Union Civilian Female Police Officers (AU Civpol), Sudanese female police officers, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) representative for the Ministry of Health, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Poloff also visited the Otash internally displaced persons camp (IDP) in Nyala.

The State Committee on VAW: Delays

[1](#)3. (SBU) The national plan of action to combat violence against women provides a general outline of the initiatives of the federal government; however, it is not as specific as the South Darfur State plan of action. The latter requires weekly assessment reports with recommendations for the action plan; it also requires specific steps for establishing standard recording and referrals for GBV legal cases and sensitizing the community on GBV prevention and response. Additionally, the state plan of action aims to identify focal points for GBV medical services in each health facility and provide a UN GBV training package to health providers. To address non-compliance with Amended Circular 2 (amendment which no longer requires legal form to receive medical

treatment), the state action plan requires that both Sudanese government officials and UN representatives on the State GBV Committee share and address alleged incidents of non-compliance of Amended Circular 2.

14. (SBU) According to Dr. Ahmed Ali Sharief, the GBV representative for the Ministry of Health, the national plan of action was incorporated in the South Darfur State plan of action, which was finalized on December 14 2005, although initially developed by decree on March 30, 2005. Sharief attributed the delay in the implementation of the plan to a lack of funding, the rotation of government officials through the GBV committee, and the shuffling of staff within the Ministry of Health. United Nations Human Rights Observers added that the State Committee met on February 9, after a month and a half of inactivity, although the committee was supposed to convene weekly.

Still No Medical Treatment without Form 8

15. (C) On October 24, 2005, the Minister of Justice signed Amended Circular 2 clarifying the rules of application for Form 8, thereby de-linking medical treatment from legal Action in cases of sexual assault. All government clinics are able to issue Form 8; however, the federal Ministry of Health decided that not all private clinics could issue Form

18. There were reports that government clinics continued to refuse medical treatment to women without a Form 8. UN Human Rights Observers confirmed the reports, citing several instances of non-compliance, including a January 29 incident in a government clinic in Manawashi, South Darfur, in which the victim was denied treatment because she did not have the form. The observers added that no clinic had been

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reprimanded for non-compliance with Amended Circular 2. Some officials within the UN said that the Ministry of Health instructed clinics not to treat women without Form 8, despite the Minister of Justice's decree.

16. (SBU) Poloff spoke with Colonel Omer of the Police Station in Nyala, who said that despite the Minister of Justice's decree, doctors might reject treating a patient without Form 8 the form protected doctors against malpractice by legally documenting the patient's diagnosis. Omer added that the police could not enforce the decree, because it was not part of their mandate.

No VAW training for Police Officers

17. (SBU) In the February Sub-Joint Implementation Mechanism (SUB-JIM) meeting in Khartoum, Dr. Abdel Moniem Taha, Director of the Advisory Council for Human Rights, cited to Poloff that the government had conducted some police training on human rights and GBV in Darfur. However, the UNMIS human rights observers in Nyala presented a different picture of events, elaborating that there had been some human rights and GBV police training by international NGOs, but no initiatives by the government to conduct the trainings. Additionally, the police in Darfur were on short-term assignments and rotated every three months; therefore, police trainings could not keep up with the influx of new officers every three months. Observers noted that the UN training was abstract in nature, and did not focus specifically on the GBV response by police in Darfur as required by the plan of action. The Police Commissioner of South Darfur confirmed that there had been no government-sponsored human rights or GBV training for police officers in Nyala.

Police Impunity Continues

18. (SBU) Poloff spoke with the Police Commissioner for South

Darfur, Abdeen El Tahir, to discuss the repercussions for the police officer implicated in the incident involving the International Rescue Committee (IRC) (reftel B). The Commissioner confirmed that the police officer was transferred to the Governor,s office after the incident. He justified the transfer by saying that the police officer apologized for the mistake, and therefore all was forgiven. Poloff replied that this did not send a good message to police officers that those who violated a woman,s privacy would be promoted to the Governor,s office. Poloff commented that the police officer made a large jump from a hit and run investigation to a vaginal exam; furthermore, she added, the incident suggested that other Sudanese women had endured this invasive abuse of privacy during routine police investigations. The Commissioner replied that, because the women had been in a house with men to whom they were not related, it had appeared suspicious to the police officer, who subsequently sent the women to the clinic.

Sudanese Female Police Officers: Not in Camps

¶9. (SBU) According to Dr. Abdel Moniem Taha, Director of the Advisory Council for Human Rights, there are female police officers stationed in each IDP camp. The Police Commissioner for South Darfur said that there were a total of 30 female police officers in Nyala and four female police officers in each camp daily. He said that the women wrote weekly reports that were given to the police representative on the State Committee to Combat GBV. In a February 8 meeting with Poloff, the female Sudanese police officers said that they were stationed in IDP camps around the town of Nyala.

¶10. (SBU) Poloff met with all the African Union Civilian Police Women (AU Civpol) stationed in IDP camps in Nyala, who presented a different picture of the Sudanese government policewomen. According to the AU Civpol and various NGOs, Sudanese policewomen were not stationed in the camps, but instead were tasked with assisting the African Union in conducting firewood patrols. Poloff visited Otash IDP camp and confirmed that Sudanese policewomen were not stationed in the camp.

Comment

¶11. (C) The Sudanese government continues to create low-level committees for the plan of action; however, there is continuing lack of political will to implement the plan of action on the ground.

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